

## **APPARENT SKILL GAME USED AS A BONUS ROUND ON A GAMING MACHINE**

1        This application relates to a gaming machine and more  
2 particularly to a gaming machine in which a bonus round game  
3 appears to be a game of skill or knowledge, but in fact, is a  
4 game of pure chance in which the outcome of the play of the  
5 gaming machine is randomly determined prior to the game of  
6 skill or knowledge being displayed on the gaming machine.

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### **Background of the Invention**

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9        In the typical gaming casino, there are many types of  
10 casino games. Electronic and mechanical gaming machines have  
11 a significant share of the casino floor and can be generally  
12 grouped into two categories: games of pure chance and games  
13 of skill.

14        Representative of a game of pure chance is the conven-  
15 tional slot machine. After making a wager, the player  
16 activates the slot machine by pulling a handle or pressing a  
17 button. The reels of the slot machine spin and, when the  
18 reels stop spinning, the outcome is displayed to the player.  
19 Winning combinations result in a payout to the player based on  
20 the amount of the player's wager. The player does not have to



1 amount to be won by the player.

2 One of the most popular secondary event bonus round games  
3 was "Wheel of Gold" marketed by Anchor Gaming Company. This  
4 game used a three reel slot machine as the main game or first  
5 level. If the player lined up a "Spin" symbol on the pay line  
6 of the third reel, the player qualified to go on to the  
7 secondary event bonus round. In the secondary event bonus  
8 round of the "Wheel of Gold" game, a rotating wheel similar to  
9 a Big Six Wheel is spun by the player who then receives the  
10 payout shown on the pay line when the wheel stops rotating.

11 Other secondary event bonus round games have followed.  
12 On the ODYSSEY multi-game machine marketed by Silicon Gaming  
13 Company, there is a secondary event game known as "Fort Knox"  
14 used in connection with a reel slot machine game. Each time  
15 the player spins the reels of the slot machine, a random  
16 number between 0 and 9 is selected. The random number  
17 selected is compared to a pre-established ten digit "code  
18 number" and when the player has successfully matched all ten  
19 digits of the code number, the player is taken to a secondary  
20 event bonus round screen in which the player selects one of  
21 three doors behind which is a payout amount awarded to the  
22 player.





1 Other objects, features and advantages of the present  
2 invention will become apparent from a consideration of the  
3 following detailed description.

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### 5 **Summary of the Invention**

6 The present invention comprises the feature of including  
7 an apparent game of skill or knowledge as a secondary event  
8 bonus round game which is won by the player during the play of  
9 a conventional electronic or mechanical gaming machine. A  
10 gaming machine, such as a slot machine, poker game machine,  
11 keno game machine, bingo game machine or other casino game  
12 machine is first played by the player and, upon the occurrence  
13 of a predetermined outcome of the gaming machine, the player  
14 wins an opportunity to play the secondary event bonus round  
15 game. At the commencement of the secondary event bonus round  
16 game, the computer controls of the electronic gaming machine  
17 select the amount of the award to be won by the player during  
18 the play of the secondary event game. The player then plays  
19 out the secondary event bonus round game, which appears to the  
20 player to be a game of skill or knowledge. Regardless of how  
21 the player fares during the play of the secondary event bonus  
22 round game, the play of the secondary event bonus round game

1 continues until the player has achieved the predetermined  
2 amount that was selected by the computer controls. Thus, the  
3 player's skill or knowledge level or ability during the play  
4 of the secondary event bonus round game has no affect on the  
5 amount won by the player during the play of the secondary  
6 event bonus round game.

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### **Brief Description of the Drawings**

9 Figure 1 shows a flow chart that depicts the steps  
10 involved in the method of play of the present invention.

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### **Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments**

13 The method of play of the present invention commences  
14 with a player making a wager and playing a conventional  
15 electronic or mechanical gaming machine. Any suitable  
16 electronic or mechanical gaming machine can be used for the  
17 play of this basic game, such as a slot machine, poker game  
18 machine, keno game machine, bingo game machine or other casino  
19 game machine. During the play of the video slot machine, the  
20 player will achieve winning and losing occurrences as is  
21 conventional.







1 of 500 coins that had been preselected by the computer  
 2 controls of the gaming machine to be won by the player during  
 3 the "Bonus Round", the secondary event game would be over at  
 4 this point. The amount won by the player is paid to the player  
 5 by dispensing coins directly from a coin hopper into a payout  
 6 tray on the gaming machine, or by accruing credits to the  
 7 player on a credit meter of the gaming machine or in any other  
 8 conventional manner of paying the player.

9 In the event that the player does not get all five of the  
 10 trivia questions correct, the player could then be asked more  
 11 trivia questions until the player has five correct answers at  
 12 which point the player appears to have earned the 500 credits.

13 In fact the player's skill or knowledge level in answering  
 14 the trivia questions is irrelevant since the gaming machine  
 15 will continue to ask the player trivia questions until the  
 16 player has achieved a sufficient number of correct answers to  
 17 earn the predetermined amount of 500 coins as his award for  
 18 the "Bonus Round".

19 Alternatively, the player could be limited to a fixed  
 20 number of questions to earn the 500 credits. If the player  
 21 has not earned the entire 500 credits after the fixed number  
 22 of questions have been asked, then the player could be given

1 the chance to play a consolation round of a different second-  
2 ary event game. During the consolation round, the player  
3 would win the necessary additional award to bring his total  
4 award during the secondary event game up to the predetermined  
5 amount of 500 coins.

6           For example, the player could get three questions correct  
7   during the trivia game and earn 300 coins. Since the player  
8   is still 200 coins short of winning the predetermined amount  
9   of 500 coins, the player would then be presented with a slot  
10 machine game. The player would then play the slot machine  
11 game for one or more spins of the reels until the player has  
12 achieved a total award of 500 coins.

13           Other methods of displaying this secondary event game to  
14 the player may be used. For example, suppose the computer  
15 controls randomly select 1200 coins as the amount to be  
16 awarded to the player during the secondary event game. The  
17 player is then asked four trivia questions. The value of each  
18 correct answer is not shown to the player until after the  
19 player has answered all four questions. This allows the  
20 computer controls of the gaming machine to adjust the value of  
21 each correct answer so that the total award to the player is  
22 1200 coins regardless of the number of correct answers

1 selected by the player.

2 If the player gets four correct answers, then each  
 3 correct answer is shown as being worth 300 coins. If the  
 4 player gets three correct answers, then each correct answer is  
 5 shown as being worth 400 coins. If the player gets two  
 6 correct answers, then each correct answer is shown as being  
 7 worth 600 coins. If the player gets only one correct answer,  
 8 then each correct answer is shown as being worth 1200 coins.

9 If the player is the village idiot and gets zero correct  
 10 answers, then the player can be awarded a booby prize in the  
 11 amount of 1200 coins for being qualified to fill the "idiot"  
 12 vacancy available at the nearest village. Alternatively, for  
 13 no correct answers, the player can be shown a video screen  
 14 having a plurality of prize locations. Regardless of the  
 15 prize location selected by the player, the amount of the prize  
 16 is 1200 coins which corresponds to the award preselected by  
 17 the computer controls of the gaming machine before the player  
 18 begins play of the secondary event game.

19 The examples discussed above are only representative of  
 20 the many ways that the amount of the preselected award can be  
 21 displayed to the player during the secondary event game "Bonus  
 22 Round". The method of the present invention allows the player

1 to compete in an apparent game of skill or knowledge and yet  
2 still win the randomly selected award preselected by the  
3 computer controls of the gaming machine before the start of  
4 the secondary event game "Bonus Round".

5 Figure 1 shows a flow chart that depicts graphically the  
6 steps involved in the present invention.

7 While the invention has been illustrated with respect to  
8 several specific embodiments thereof, these embodiments should  
9 be considered as illustrative rather than limiting. Various  
10 modifications and additions may be made and will be apparent  
11 to those skilled in the art.